

# NEWS RELEASE

US DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR ■ BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
NEW MEXICO STATE OFFICE ■ 1474 RODEO RD ■ SANTA FE NM 87505

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**For Immediate Release**  
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**For Additional Information**  
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## **BLM to Amend Resource Management Plans to Protect Habitat for the Lesser Prairie Chicken and Sand Dune Lizard**

Roswell, NM -- The Bureau of Land Management has published a Notice of Intent in the *Federal Register* to amend resource management plans for its Roswell and Carlsbad field offices to address future management of habitat for the lesser prairie chicken and sand dune lizard.

The purpose of the amendment is to develop habitat management strategies that will help the BLM respond to changing resource conditions for the two 'special status' species on public lands in the planning area. The species have experienced population declines over the past decade and are candidates for listing as 'threatened' or 'endangered' under the Endangered Species Act.

Tim Kreager, Acting Roswell Field Office Manager said, "We believe that the public and the species will be better served by having the BLM act now, instead of waiting until the species might be listed as threatened or endangered." BLM has already issued interim guidelines on protecting and managing habitat for the species, which include some restrictions on activities occurring on core habitat areas on public lands.

The first step in the process is to open a 60-day 'public scoping' period for the plan amendments. This is the public's opportunity to comment on the issues and concerns that the BLM should consider during the development of the Resource Management Plan Amendment/Environmental Impact Statement (RMPA/EIS). The scoping period will close on February 4, 2005. BLM will then begin developing the Draft RMPA/EIS, a process that should take about 7 months.

The planning area (1.8 million acres in Roosevelt, Chaves, Eddy and Lea Counties) contains about 847,000 acres of public land with an additional 298,000 acres of federal mineral estate. About 72 percent of the federal mineral estate within the planning area is currently under lease for oil and gas development.

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Four formal scoping meetings will be held:

January 11 Portales - Sandia Room, Campus Union, Eastern New Mexico University;  
January 13 Roswell - BLM Roswell Field Office, 2909 W. 2nd;  
January 18 Carlsbad - Pecos River Village Conference Center, 711 Muscatel Avenue  
January 20 Hobbs - Hobbs Public Library, 509 N. Shipp Street

The formal scoping meetings will begin at 6:00 p.m. and run until 9:00 p.m.

Two Economic Profile Systems workshops will be held:

February 9 Roswell - Roswell Civic Center, 912 N. Main Street  
February 10 Carlsbad - Pecos River Village Conference Center, 711 Muscatel Avenue

The workshops, which will begin at 8:00 a.m. and run until 5:00 p.m., will present socioeconomic information about southeastern New Mexico which will be used in the planning effort.

The public may obtain a schedule of meetings and documents as they become available at the Roswell Field Office, 2909 W. Second Street (505.627.0272) and at the Carlsbad Field Office, 620 E. Greene St. (505.234-5972). An electronic version of meeting schedules and documents can be reviewed at:

**[www.nm.blm.gov/planning\\_nepa\\_home.html](http://www.nm.blm.gov/planning_nepa_home.html)**

Written comments will be accepted at the Roswell Field Office address until the close of the comment period. Comments can also be e-mailed to: [nm\\_comments@nm.blm.gov](mailto:nm_comments@nm.blm.gov)  
The public comment period ends February 4, 2005.

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